

indie bookstore entrepreneur

spring 2010

Poy & Associates
THE BOOKSTORE TRAINING GROUP

Thinking of opening a bookstore?

Join us for a one-day program at BookExpo America in NYC designed to help you decide.

[Watch for details from ABA.](#)



Next workshop retreat

Opening A Bookstore:
The Business Essentials

Sept. 13-17, 2010
Amelia Island,
Florida

[Click here for details.](#)

What a great

Spring

The season itself speaks to new beginnings, freshness, and new growth.

What will we choose to do with our 'thought time' this spring ... the time we use to dream, explore, and decide what to make a priority? Be mindful of identifying the things you'd really like to accomplish with the business. Write them down.



3 Things, No Fail

Some things just seem so big we never tackle them. They still occupy our 'thought time', but just become reminders of our failure to get to them. Be mindful about the meaningful priorities you've identified and *pick just three easy things* you can do each week. By breaking them down into tiny steps (which you can do or delegate), you'll see you're making progress and soon will find you've actually accomplished your goal.

no place like it.



The reasons some bookstores become institutions within their community are many, but today, a bookstore has to offer a wonderful *sense of place* to get people out from behind their computers to shop ... and buy ... at their local indie bookstore.

What elements create that indescribable sense of place? There are retail strategies behind creating the memorable connections between our merchandise and our customers:

- *fully stocked displays* are situated along a traffic path and lead the customer from one wonderful display to the next
- the *traffic path* leads the customer through the entire store and encourages exploration

bookstore!

From store design and marketing to coaching during your first year and providing business valuations, we're here to help you develop and improve your bookstore business .



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- *seating in quiet spaces* offers rest and space to spend time with the merchandise gathered so far
- *focal point fixtures* have soul or character
- kids have *opportunities for play and interaction*, without damaging merchandise
- *restrooms* are available to customers, and are clean and uncluttered
- *signs with positive language* are helpful
- the *cash wrap* creates a lasting positive impression; the words '*thank you*' appear on signage and are spoken with every single customer

A sense of place becomes more vibrant when we combine retail design principles with our love of books.

smart + spirited = success

serendipitous discovery.



At ABA's Winter Institute in San Jose, we loved listening to the fresh insights from industry outsiders like Daniel Clancy of Google. Clancy used the phrase 'serendipitous discovery' as one benefit of browsing a retail bookstore.

How can you create even more of those pleasant surprises customers love ... the ones that prompt them to find and buy something they never knew existed?

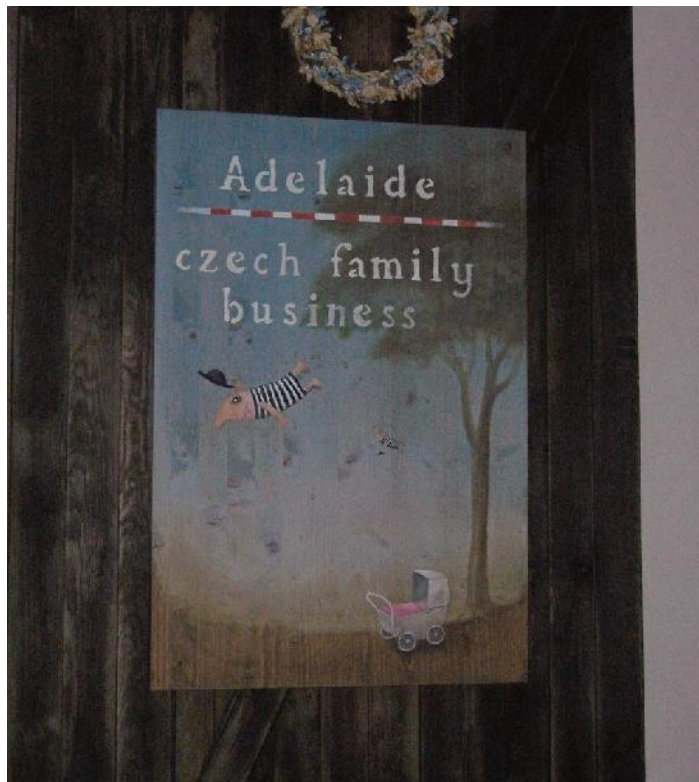
Pictured here is a fun display of *WEIRD, WILD & WONDERFUL* at Joseph-Beth's Cincinnati store. These quirky books would have gotten lost if it wasn't for this display.

What fun little gems - that *defy categories* - are begging for attention in your store right now?

create pleasant surprises.

unmistakably indie.





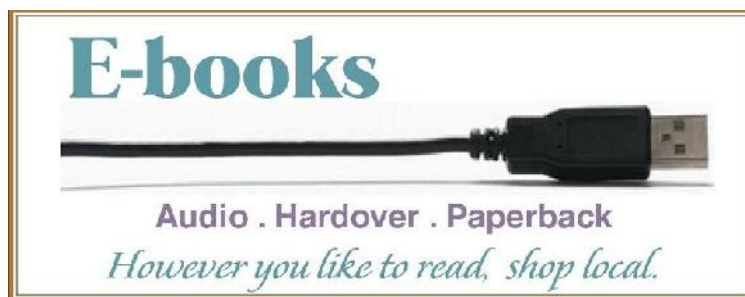
While in Prague last year, we discovered a family-owned gift store with a large sign on the store's exterior. A fun graphic and a few words put the competitive advantage front and center. Of course we had to go inside!

According to the [Verso Advertising study](#), indie booksellers have **Mind Share, but a shrinking Market Share**. This is great news. The majority of readers want to shop at an indie bookstore!

How would first-time visitors know you're an indie bookstore? Approach your store from the outside, then walk through the sales floor specifically with an eye for the indie message.

**use Mind Share to
maximize your Market Share.**

how would you like your book today?



If you'll add e-books to the range of formats you offer, how will customers know they can buy through you?

With [Toadstool Books' customer survey](#) that was recently reported in ABA's *Bookselling This Week*, the store discovered that as many as ten percent of their customers have e-readers or are thinking of purchasing one. Ten percent of your market share can add up to a lot of lost sales.

Since technology is giving customers more choices on where they buy their e-books, and since indies have 'Mind Share', it makes good sense to pursue this market rather than let it slip away.

Five easy ways to share the message:

1. Sign at cash wrap
2. Shelf-talkers throughout the store
3. Letter to customers in your newsletter
4. Ongoing ads in your newsletters (like the one above)
5. Promotional bookmarks or bag-stuffers

If losing ten percent of your market share feels like too much, make sure you're getting the message out.

sunny-side up or scrambled.

7 reasons to be optimistic about the future of retail bookselling.



1. More and more politicians and tax payers recognize that a community of small businesses offers greater economic stability
2. A growing number of cities are providing incentives to small businesses
3. A growing number of cities and towns are also

- specifically seeking people to open indie bookstores because of citizen input
4. The economic bust has brought down rental rates and commercial buildings have become more affordable
 5. The e-book market extends beyond one, aggressive corporation and indies can have a piece of it
 6. E-book research is showing unit sales growth for young male professionals; e-books make reading easier for the sight-impaired and more appealing to reluctant readers
 7. Indie bookstores enjoy Mind Share - according to the [Verso Advertising study](#), the majority of readers want to shop at a locally owned bookstore

Tomorrow's bookstore may look and work a bit differently, but there's no reason to believe the sky is falling and indie bookstores are about to be extinct.

"Indie" is in. Let's keep the momentum going.

it's our time to shine.

we hope to see you.

At [BookExpo America](#) in New York City. Follow us online on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) too for the latest ideas, resources, and research that prompts entrepreneurial thought.

And if you like what you see here, please be sure to pass it on.

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